PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES
2025 USC ARTS IN ACTION GRANTS PROGRAM FOR FACULTY AND STUDENTS

OVERVIEW

The mission of [USC Arts in Action](#) is to plant seeds for positive social change by creating and supporting intensive arts projects between community partners and USC faculty and students. Embodying USC's six unifying values and building on the University's commitment to addressing society's most intractable problems, projects span a wide range of creative disciplines to tackle systemic oppression and social issues, including homelessness, mass incarceration, systemic racism, sustainability and climate justice, educational inequity, health and wellness, and multiple forms of violence.

Arts in Action invites USC faculty and students to submit preliminary proposals for community-based projects that address social issues, bring people together, facilitate dialogue, and create spaces to imagine and design future change. Awarded grantees should begin their projects no earlier than February 1, 2025.

WHO CAN APPLY?

- Faculty and current students from across USC are invited to apply. Please note that the primary applicant's home department or school must manage funding for awarded projects.
- Proposals that include at least one faculty member from one of USC's six arts schools are encouraged and will be prioritized.
- Teams comprised of faculty or students from multiple USC schools are encouraged.
- Students submitting a proposal must identify at least one faculty mentor as a key project team member. Faculty mentors should be willing to discuss the project with Arts in Action staff following the preliminary proposal stage if requested.

GRANT GUIDELINES

- **Art Component**. Eligible disciplines include visual art and design, dramatic arts, cinematic arts, media arts, music, dance, and architecture. Projects involving multiple art forms are welcome and encouraged.
- **Collaboration**. Arts in Action projects are participant-driven, challenging the separation between "artists" and "audiences." We prioritize artwork that grows from a shared process, where the collaborative act of creating the work is a core part of a project's impact and value.

- **Community Partnership**. All projects should include a minimum of one community partner. The proposed project should be developed with participation from the proposed partner(s), benefiting or addressing the needs of the community they serve.
- **Addressing a Social Issue(s)**. The proposed project or applicant must demonstrate understanding and knowledge of the social issue(s) the project is addressing and identify the impacts of the proposed project.
- **Student Involvement and Engagement**. All projects should involve USC student participation. The proposed project should be designed with the goal of offering students opportunities to participate in the project.
- **Quality and Impact.** Projects should address urgent issue(s) with the goal of contributing to meaningful social change.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- The project may involve hosting a free public event, such as a workshop, performance, or service activity.
- Projects should include at least one identified community partnership, but preliminary proposals are not required to have community partners confirmed.
- Work that takes place off campus and in community settings is strongly encouraged.
- Proposals should demonstrate the project's potential impacts and feasibility of achieving its objectives.
- Faculty proposals are not required to include a class component. If a course component is included, courses should be open to students outside the school or department. Proposals that include courses offered to all USC students will be prioritized.
- Faculty proposals should not rely on class components to meet the student involvement guideline.

RETURNING APPLICANTS

- Returning applicants may apply for funding for the same project for up to three consecutive years. We are especially interested in projects demonstrating growth and highlighting a new phase or development. Repeat funding is not guaranteed.
- All grantees must complete the required grantee report at the end of the project. Returning applicants who have not completed the report will not be considered.
- Returning applicants are not restricted from applying for and receiving additional Arts in Action grant funding if those funds are used for a new project. Applicants must demonstrate that the project serves another community, occurs in different spaces and times, and achieves fundamentally distinct programmatic outcomes.

WHAT WE DON'T FUND

- Faculty courses and Maymesters are not funded, but project proposals may include a course component.
- Art commissions are not funded.
- Film productions are not funded but may be listed as a project component if they support the overall participatory project.
- Event-based projects (i.e., conferences, concerts, festivals, fairs), are not funded. See the "Modes of Participation" grid on page 5 for further guidance. Arts in Action supports projects that include modes of participation 3 – 5 on the grid. More information about all Arts in Action projects can be found at artsinaction.usc.edu/project.

HOW TO APPLY

USC Arts in Action is using Common Grant Application to manage the application process. Interested faculty and students should submit preliminary proposals online by 11:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 1st.

Please register or begin your application at one of the following links:

- Register as a first-time user
- Log in as a returning user

Please note that the CommonGrantApplication.com system will automatically close on the grant deadline.

After the preliminary proposals are reviewed by the Arts in Action advisory committee, selected applicants will receive instructions on how to submit a full proposal. If invited to submit a full proposal, applicants must submit a letter of support from their school's chair or dean.

INFORMATION SESSION

Wednesday, September 11, at 1 p.m.
Zoom details will be shared with those who RSVP.
Applicants are encouraged to participate in this informational session and Q&A to learn more about Arts in Action funded projects and what it takes to create a successful proposal and project. *To RSVP, email artsinaction@usc.edu.*

KEY DATES

Tuesday, October 1, 2024, 11:00 p.m.: Preliminary proposals due

Late October 2024: Request for full applications sent out to successful applicants
Sunday, December 1, 2024, 11:00 p.m.: Full proposals due
January 2025: Successful applicants notified

Appendix: Modes of Participation Grid

This breakdown of "modes of participation" was created by the James Irvine Foundation. We include it as a helpful resource for applicants seeking further guidance on what constitutes a strong community collaboration. "Participants," in the case of Arts in Action, refers to community partners. **We support projects that fall within categories 3 through 5.**

Mode of Participation	Participant Engagement	Content Contributed by Participants	Presented or Culminating Artistic Product	Examples	Role of Arts Professionals
1. **Observational:** participants receive finished work presented by arts professionals	Watching/ Viewing	None	No contribution by participants	Performance/ Exhibit	Sole Author, Presenting/Exhibiting Content
2. **Observational Learning:** participants receive finished work with explicit learning or enrichment component	Learning	None to minimal	No contribution by participants	Educational component to performance/exhibit	Sole Author, Presenting/Exhibiting Content
3. **Co-Presentation:** participants share in presentation/ exhibition of artistic work	Doing/ Practicing with guidance or instruction	Minor choices and suggestions	Participants play an instrumental role	Play with community actors; artist-driven community mural	Leading/Directing, possibly participating
4. **Co-Creation**: participants share in creation of new artistic work	Contribute content to artistic product	Major artistic input	Final product is shaped by contributions of participants	Creation and performance of a play based on stories of a community	Gathering input, directing, guiding, presenting/exhibiting content
5. **Participant - Driven:** participants engage directly in the creative process, with or without involvement of arts professionals	Doing/ Practicing	Maximum artistic input	Product not necessarily required	Art-making workshops or classes where participants create or present work	Lightly facilitating/organizing